From: David Bezold
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 1:22pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I am writing to express my opinion that the present DOJ settlement with Microsoft does not go far enough to prevent Microsoft's Monopolistic business practices.

I have spent my entire career (25 years) as an embedded software developer. I was writing software before the MacIntosh, before Microsoft, and before SUN. I have watched the development of the software engineering discipline - a discipline devoted to "engineering" software. Remember, an engineer is someone who is "skilled in the principles and practice of any branch of engineering" (Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary (1913)).

A professional engineer must have the skill to produce reliable, working designs. If they do not, they are not allowed to practice their craft. If a civil engineer consistently designs bridges that fail, that engineer will lose his/her clients to another civil engineer (and will likely be sued)? If an embedded software engineer writes software that controls a television, and that software contains bugs that causes the television to consistently fail to operate, the engineer will likely loose his/her job?

The world's largest software company consistently produces software that makes computers crash and misbehave. Yet this company maintains some of the largest profit margins and growth anywhere in the world economy? Why is that? That company is a monopoly. There is no competitor who will profit from Microsoft's poor engineering.

The current DOJ settlement does not go far enough to solve this problem. It must take actions to make it possible for real competitors to Microsoft to come into the marketplace. Competition is what spurs innovation in our economy. As long as there is no competition in the PC operating system marketplace, we will continue to have computers that crash and misbehave, to the detriment of all consumers.

-David Bezold

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